

NO:6 and/or a functional equivalent thereof, said interleukin-18 and said functional equivalent thereof being capable of exerting osteoclastgenic inhibitory activity, wherein said functional equivalent is a member selected from the group consisting of (i) those wherein one or more amino acids in the amino acid sequence of interleukin-18 are replaced with different amino acids, (ii) those wherein one or more amino acids are added to the N- and/or C-termini of the amino acid sequence of interleukin-18, (iii) those wherein one or more amino acids are inserted into the internal sites of the amino acid sequence of interleukin-18, (iv) those wherein one or more amino acids in the N- and/or C-terminal regions of the amino acid sequence of interleukin-18 are deleted, and (v) those wherein one or more amino acids in the internal regions of the amino acid sequence of interleukin-18 are deleted.

2 (Twice-amended). The inhibitory composition of claim 1, wherein said interleukin-18 or said functional equivalent thereof comprises each of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:2, and SEQ ID NO:3.

3 (Twice-amended). The inhibitory composition of claim 1, wherein said interleukin-18 or functional equivalent

thereof comprises both the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:5.

Please add new claim 28 as follows:

--28 (New). The inhibitory composition of claim 1, wherein said functional equivalent comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:6 where one or more cysteine residues is replaced with a different amino acid residue.--